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18 January 1949

Dr. W. M. Chapman  
Special Assistant to the Under Secretary  
Department of State  
Washington, D. C.

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐  
☒ DECLASSIFIED  
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Dear Dr. Chapman:

In reply to your letter of 11 January 1949 with regard to Soviet penetration into the fisheries of the West Coast of Mexico, this office has no knowledge of any Soviet-Mexican fishery negotiations such as those reported in the Merkel-Loker correspondence.

Nothing in the files of the Central Intelligence Agency indicates negotiations of similar character, at present or in prospect, between the USSR and other West Coast Latin American countries. It was reported, in February 1948, that a Colombian fishing company was interested in obtaining fishing privileges in the Galapagos, and it was further reported that this company was believed to be financed by Communists. A subsequent report gave the names of the officers of the company, none of whom is known to have any Communist connections. There have been no further reports from field personnel of this agency or any other agency confirming or adding any light to the original suspicion. It is the opinion of this office that it is unfounded.

With regard to the possibility of Russian intelligence being forwarded from Latin America by certain elements in the tuna fleet, the Office of Naval Intelligence reports that there is no clear evidence of such activity. Furthermore, nothing in the files of the Central Intelligence Agency substantiates this possibility.

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Sincerely yours,

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*signed*  
R. H. WILLENKOTTER  
Rear Admiral, USN  
Director of Central Intelligence

JAN 24 1949  
ORE-10-

NOTE FOR RECORD: Based on IM #78, 17 Jan 49, ORE 407884.

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